



Welcome to Spark2, the Tribe weekly parsha activity sheet for Children's Service Leaders across the United Synagogue communities.

Thank you for offering to run a service. The US is very proud of the numerous Children's Services that are run every week across the UK and this would not happen without you.

Spark2 gives you an overview of the weekly parsha, a song, activity or Dvar Torah linked to the parsha or important event that week. Every children's service will be different, in terms of how many participants there are, their age range, its length and the varying abilities of the children. Please read through the document and find the activities that will best suit the needs of your group. It is advisable to read it before Shabbat in case there is some preparation that may be needed in advance.

I hope you and the children at your service will benefit from Spark2. Please be in touch if you have any queries, feedback or if I can be of any help.

With best wishes,
Sharon Radley
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Re'eh

Parsha Summary:

- Moshe is about to pass away and continues to address the Jewish people before they cross the Jordan River and enter Eretz Yisrael. He tells them that they can either receive blessings or curses. If they listen to the commandments of God they will be blessed. If not they will be cursed. The Jewish people are to destroy all idols that they find in Eretz Yisrael and Moshe further informs the nation that in the future God will specify a location (Jerusalem) where He will choose to rest His Presence. All korbanot will be offered from there.
- Moshe tells the people not to be influenced by the practices of the Canaanites but to remain true to the Torah. Any person professing to be a prophet, who claims to bring instructions from God to worship idols must be put to death.
- We are told that tattoos and other forms of mutilation of our bodies are forbidden and we are given a list of kosher animals and non-kosher fowl. We are also given signs to distinguish between kosher animals and fish and their non-kosher counterparts. This section of the parsha concludes with the prohibitions against eating meat from an animal that has not been slaughtered in the correct way and against cooking meat with milk.
- Moshe commands the Jewish people to designate every seventh year as a Shmitta (Sabbatical) year. During this year creditors must forgive outstanding loans and there are instructions about how to look after the land in this year. A

Jewish slave must be freed after six years of service and must be given generous gifts as he departs.

- The parsha concludes with a discussion regarding the festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot. Some laws regarding the festivals are given and we are commanded to rejoice during the festivals.

Children's Service: Tot's – Year 2

The parsha this week tells us all about the *Shalosh Regalim*- the Three Foot Festivals: Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot.

Ask the children:

- Why are these festivals called the Shalosh Regalim?
- Discuss the word Shalosh. It means three. Count up to ten in Hebrew with the children
- What is a *regel*? It is a foot! *Regalim* means – feet!

So why are these festivals called the *foot festivals*?

In the time of the Bet Hamikdash when all the Jewish people were living in Eretz Yisrael, they were commanded by the Torah to go on FOOT to Yerushalyim and join in the festivities and the service at the Bet Hamikdash with the Kohanim.

Today we don't have the Bet Hamikdash anymore so we can't go there, but we still celebrate the festivals and many people try to go to the Kotel which is the one remaining wall of the Bet Hamikdash.

Activity 1:

The group leader should introduce 3 different actions – one, e.g. clapping hands, for Pesach, one for Shavuot and one for Sukkot. The leader should call out an object or a word to do with one of these three *chagim*. An example would be 'matzah'. When a child hears the word he should decide which *chag* it is from and do that action. Any child doing the wrong action is out.

Ideas for words could be: Succah, lulav, etrog, hadassim, aravot, Egypt, slaves, chametz, Torah, plagues, frogs, flowers, cheese cake.....

Activity 2:

The parsha this week also tells us about which animals and fish are kosher and non-kosher. We are allowed to eat kosher food.

- Ask what the signs for a kosher animal are and explain that a kosher animal must chew the cud and have split hooves. Explain what both of these mean. A kosher fish must have both fins and scales.

Split the children into groups and give them pictures of kosher and non-kosher animals and fish, for example: cow, sheep, bison, donkey, deer, hare, gazelle, yak, ibex, herring, anchovy, pike, cod, caviar, whiting, plaice, squid, salmon, haddock, roach, halibut...

You will probably need to put the names underneath the pictures as well. In their groups the children should make two columns of pictures. One column should be the kosher column and the other the non-kosher column. For each correct answer award a point to the group. The group with the most points wins!

Children's Service: Years 3-6

The parsha this week tells us all about the *Shalosh Regalim*- the Three Foot Festivals: Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot.

Ask the children:

Why are these festivals called the Shalosh Regalim?

- Discuss the word Shalosh. It means three. Count up to twenty in Hebrew with the children
- What is a *regel*? It is a foot! *Regalim* means – feet!
- So why are these festivals called the *foot festivals*?

In the time of the Bet Hamikdash when all the Jewish people were living in Eretz Yisrael they were commanded by the Torah to go on FOOT to Yerushalyim and join in the festivities and the service at the Bet Hamikdash with the Kohanim.

Today we don't have the Bet Hamikdash anymore so we can't go there but we still celebrate the festivals and many people try to go to the Kotel which is the one remaining wall of the Bet Hamikdash.

Activity 1:

The parsha this week also tells us about which animals and fish are kosher and non-kosher. We are allowed to eat kosher food.

- Ask what the signs for a kosher animal are and explain that a kosher animal must chew the cud and have split hooves. Explain what both of these mean. A kosher fish must have both fins and scales.

Split the children into groups and give them pictures of kosher and non-kosher animals and fish, for example: cow, sheep, bison, donkey, deer, hare, gazelle, yak, ibex, herring, anchovy, pike, cod, caviar, whiting, plaice, squid, salmon, haddock, roach, halibut...

You will probably need to put the names underneath the pictures as well. In their groups the children should make two columns of pictures. One column should be the kosher column and the other the non-kosher column. For each correct answer award a point to the group. The group with the most points wins!

Activity 2:

Explain the following to the children:

Parshat Re'eh tells us that we have to slaughter animals in the correct way in order for them to be kosher. The kosher way to kill an animal is by a process called *Shechita* and the person who slaughters the animal is called a *Shochet*. The Shochet is highly trained over a number of years in animal anatomy, pathology, the laws of Shechita and animal welfare and is examined and licensed every twelve months. The Shochet must also be licensed by the local authority where he practises Shechita.

In order for the process to be totally painless for the animal a very sharp knife called a *chalaf* is used and the throat of the animal is cut in a special way. The animal does not feel anything. Judaism strictly forbids '*tzar baalei chayim*' which means causing an animal unnecessary pain and that is why Shechita is done this way.

Explain to the children that if they cut their finger with something very sharp they probably wouldn't notice it for longer than if they cut their finger with a blunt object. Often it is the blood which first alerts us to a cut with a very sharp blade rather than the pain.

The cut to the animal is made to the artery which takes blood to the brain. When the animal is cut there it becomes unconscious straight away and because the knife is so sharp the animal doesn't feel anything before it loses consciousness.

Explain to the children that there is much misunderstanding and misconception about Shechita. Most people who criticize Shechita simply do not know the facts.

Pretend to have a mock court case where someone is bringing a Shochet to the court in order to accuse him of causing pain to an animal. Choose children to be the judge, the Shochet, witnesses, the jury etc. Ask the Shochet to defend Shechita. You may want to give the children more information about Shechita as there is only a very short summary written here. The website www.shechitauk.org is very a good resource.